

**Subject: Divesture from business that support the occupation of the Palestine Territory and encouragement of support of the “Peace not Walls” initiative**

**Source: Crossroads Conference**

WHEREAS, the ELCA Churchwide Assembly voted to approve an educational effort to promote understanding of the plight of people living in occupied areas of Palestine called PEACE NOT WALLS, and (1)

WHEREAS, the ELCA and its predecessor bodies have consistently upheld the values of justice as it stood in solidarity with Christians in South Africa during the days in which apartheid was the official policy of South Africa; and (2)

WHEREAS, the Kairos Palestine document of 2009 (A Moment of Truth: a word of faith, hope and love from the heart of Palestinian suffering) calls for a similar understanding of the plight of Christians living in occupied Palestine, and (3)

WHEREAS, the example of South Africa shows it is imperative for Christians to stand unequivocally against all forms of racism and bigotry including but not limited to anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and Israel’s system of apartheid; and

WHEREAS, certain companies have promoted and been complicit in ongoing human rights violations systematically committed by the Israeli government, which have been documented by organizations including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Defense for Children International, and B’tselem; and (4)

WHEREAS, according to the International Court of Justice (ICJ), “construction by Israel of a wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory is contrary to international law” as are Israeli settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem; and (5)

WHEREAS, according to the UN General Assembly’s application of the Fourth Geneva Convention, the building of settlements and exploitation of natural resources in the occupied Palestinian territory is illegal by international law; and (6)

WHEREAS, our ELCA pension program (Portico) is free to invest in, and thereby profit from companies which have an active role in the human rights abuse and institutionalized structural violence against the Palestinian people, thereby enabling Portico to be a complicit third-party; and

WHEREAS, Caterpillar has helped sustain the occupation by providing engineering tools and bulldozers to destroy Palestinian houses, neighborhoods, agriculture, and water cisterns as well as construct barrier Wall and checkpoints; and (7)

WHEREAS, Cement Roadstones Holding (CRH) has also contributed to the construction of military checkpoints, the Wall, and the settlement enterprise by providing cement and other building material; and (7)

WHEREAS, Cemex has supplied building materials used to build illegal settlements, the Wall, and checkpoints and also illegally owns and operates manufacturing plants in West Bank settlements, exploiting Palestinian natural resources in violation of international law; and (7)

WHEREAS, Hewlett-Packard Company (HP) has supported restricting the freedom of movement of the Palestinian peoples within the West Bank by providing biometric identification systems used in the Israeli military checkpoints; and (7)

WHEREAS, Raytheon’s guided missiles were used to ruthlessly level civilian regions during Operation Cast Lead; and (7)

WHEREAS, Sodastream operates a manufacturing plant in an illegal Israeli settlement in the West Bank; and (8)

WHEREAS, L-3 Communications has provided the Israeli occupation with equipment used in military checkpoints throughout the occupied West Bank to take away Palestinian freedom of movement between Palestinian towns and cities; to fragmentize and strangle the Palestinian economy ; (9)

THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED, that the South Dakota Synod Assembly direct the South Dakota Synod Council to ask the ELCA Church Council to recommend to Portico that it gradually divest itself of investments in companies that a) provide military support for, or weaponry to, support the occupation of the Palestinian territory or b) facilitate the building or maintenance of the illegal barrier Wall or the demolition of Palestinian homes, or c) facilitate the building, maintenance, or economic development of illegal Israeli settlements on occupied Palestinian territory; and

FINALLY LET IT BE RESOLVED, that the South Dakota Synod actively support the PEACE NOT WALLS initiative by encouraging congregations to avail themselves of resources provided by the ELCA.

(1) <http://www.elca.org/News-and-Events/7606>

(2) [http://www.luthersem.edu/archives/collections/rg2/south\\_africa.aspx?m=4566](http://www.luthersem.edu/archives/collections/rg2/south_africa.aspx?m=4566)

(3) <http://www.kairopalestine.ps/sites/default/Documents/English.pdf>

(4) <http://www.thejerusalemfund.org/ht/a/GetDocumentAction/i/2934>  
<http://www.btselem.org/>

(5) [http://www.hrw.org/legacy/english/docs/2004/02/20/isrlpa7581\\_txt.htm](http://www.hrw.org/legacy/english/docs/2004/02/20/isrlpa7581_txt.htm)

(6) [http://itisapartheid.org/Documents\\_pdf\\_etc/IsraelViolationsInternationalLaw.pdf](http://itisapartheid.org/Documents_pdf_etc/IsraelViolationsInternationalLaw.pdf)

(7) <http://www.interfaithpeaceinitiative.com/profitting.pdf>

<http://whoprofits.org/company/africa-israel>

<http://www.business-humanrights.org/Categories/Individualcompanies/L/LevLevievGroup>

<http://www.catdestroyshomes.org/>

<http://electronicintifada.net/content/israeli-women-expose-companies-complicit-occupation/8051>

<https://afsc.org/sites/afsc.civicaactions.net/files/documents/Israel-Palestine%20Investment%20Screen%20-%20Companies%20List.pdf>

<http://khanya.wordpress.com/2008/04/23/jews-urge-christians-to-disinvest-from-companies-benefiting-from-israeli-occupation/>

<http://www.endtheoccupation.org/section.php?id=203>

(8) <http://www.bdsmovement.net/2014/sodastream-drops-amid-sanctions-over-jewish-settlements-11719>

(9) [http://www.business-humanrights.org/Categories/Individualcompanies/L/L-3Communications?sort\\_on=sortable\\_title&batch\\_size=10&batch\\_start=4](http://www.business-humanrights.org/Categories/Individualcompanies/L/L-3Communications?sort_on=sortable_title&batch_size=10&batch_start=4)